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**Iowa Department of Education**

***Child Development Coordinating Council***

***Shared Visions Annual Report***

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***Iowa Department of Education***

Grimes State Office Building  
Des Moines, IA 50319

January, 2014

State of Iowa  
**Department of Education**  
Grimes State Office Building  
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## Introduction

The Iowa Child Development Coordinating Council (CDCC) presents this report in fulfilling the requirement to annually submit recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly on the need for investment in child development services.<sup>1</sup> The CDCC advises and assists the Department of Education (DE) regarding the administration and implementation of state funded at-risk programs for children ages birth to five. The DE administers two programs: the Shared Visions Parent Support Program and the Shared Visions Preschool Program.

The mission of CDCC is to advocate for Iowa's children and families and support model comprehensive child development and parent support programs for at-risk children and their families. CDCC ensures the development, delivery, and promotion of quality, family-centered comprehensive early childhood services through:<sup>2</sup>

- Established minimum guidelines for comprehensive early child development services for at-risk 3 - and 4-year-old children;
- Parent support programs targeted to Iowa's most at-risk children and their families which enhance the skills of parents to support the learning and development of their children;
- Cost-effective child development services for at-risk 3- and 4-year-old children;
- Comprehensive services such as child care, transportation, family support and education, developmental screening, and referral to health professionals.

### **Parent Support Programs**

The Shared Visions Parent Support programs include:

- Parent support programs for high-risk children in approximately 14 Iowa counties (for families with incomes below 125 percent of the poverty level);
- Nine grantees located in area education agencies, public schools, Head Start, and private non-profit agencies. The grantees collaborate with local Early Childhood Iowa Boards, local child care, area education agencies, and school districts; and
- Individual home visitation and/or group based parent support services focused on parenting skills, child growth and development, building of self-concept, nutrition, positive guidance techniques, family resource management, and parent literacy, and accessing the array of supportive services from a network of agencies that are available to families with young children who are at risk.

**Funding.** In 2012-2013, state funds of \$691,069 supported nine Parent/Family Support Programs serving 1,036 children birth to 5 years of age and their families. This funding has decreased by \$111,962 in the past five years. In fiscal year 2013, three programs chose to discontinue applying for Shared Vision funds.

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<sup>1</sup> IAC 256A, IAC 279.51, and IAC 281

<sup>2</sup> IAC 256A

**Data Reporting.** In fiscal year 2013, Shared Visions Parent Support Programs began a collaboration with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH), Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visitation (MIECHV) program. A key element of this on-going collaboration was the implementation of a web-based data collection system that provides reports to state agencies to use for reporting, planning, and system development.

For fiscal year 2013 (only), IDPH's MIECHV grant provided "start up" funding and technical assistance for any Shared Visions Parent/Family Support Programs that volunteered to participate. Seven of the nine grantees accepted this volunteer opportunity.

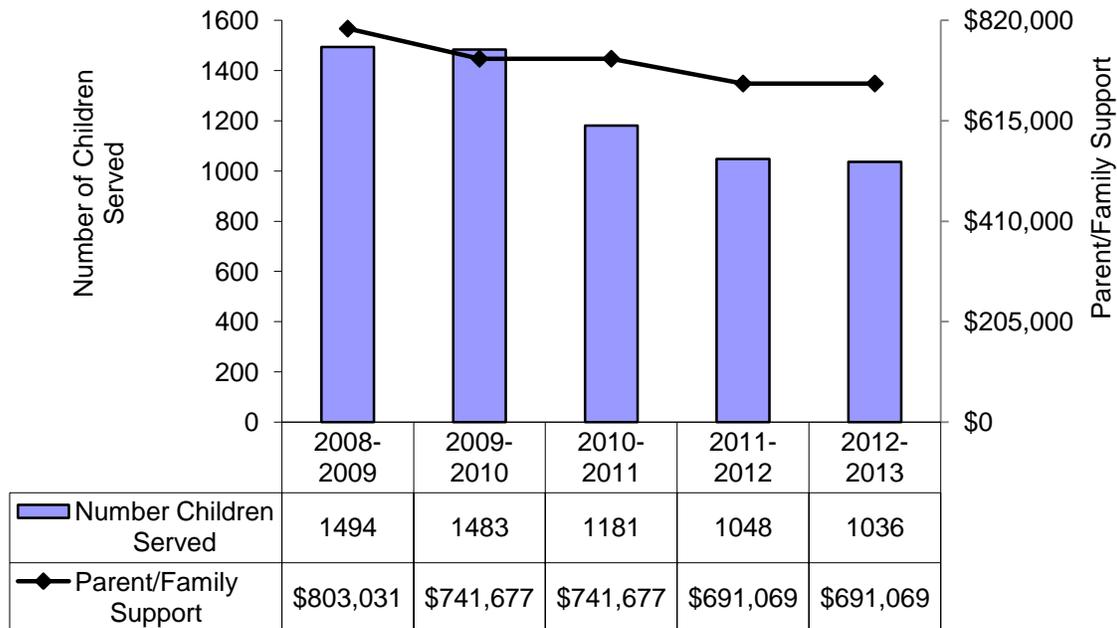
The start-up proposal provided the following:

- iPads and software for data collection (approx. \$400/per iPad) for family support workers;
- Training and technical assistance for family support workers and information technology (IT) staff at each program/agency; and
- On-going connection to the Research Electronic Data Capture (REDCap) web-based system and customized data reports. (*Note: REDCap is a secure, web-based application used for data collection and is administered by the University of Iowa.*)

The data presented in this annual report represents the transition from the previous paper-based year-end reporting/data collection. With seven grantees using the REDCap system and two using the paper-based report, some of the data definitions were not specifically aligned. This will self correct in future years as all grantees began using REDCap as of July 1, 2013. Future reports will include higher quality data that is captured in "real time" with more specific data definitions as well as family assessment data not previously collected.

**Children Served.** Figure 1 (below) shows a five year trend of the enrollment of children ages birth through 5 years, using the September count data. The enrollments have adjusted per the available funding. Approximately 90 percent of the children qualified for Shared Visions based upon poverty, the remaining children qualified with other risk factors.

**Figure 1.** Five Year Trend - Annual Funding and Number of Children Served by Shared Visions Parent Support Programs.



Source. Iowa Department of Education, CDC Shared Visions Grant Year End Report, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013. Summary.

Services to young children who have or are at risk for developmental delays have been shown to positively impact outcomes across developmental domains, including health, language and communication, cognitive development and social/emotional development. Families benefit from early intervention by being able to better meet their children’s special needs from an early age and throughout their lives. Benefits to society include reducing economic burden through a decreased need for special education.<sup>3</sup> Shared Visions Parent Support Programs assist in identifying children needing early intervention services under Iowa’s Early ACCESS system. Last year, Shared Visions Parent Support Programs referred 122 young children for special education services after being enrolled in the Parent Family Support Programs.

**Results.** The Shared Visions Parent Support Programs contribute to Iowa results.

**Safe and Supportive Communities.** Shared Visions Parent Support Programs report a decrease in the percentage of children experiencing abuse and neglect.

**Secure and Nurturing Families and Children Ready to Succeed in School.** Most Shared Visions Parent Support Programs use the Parents as Teachers (PAT) curriculum to support parents learning developmentally appropriate parenting behaviors. Several also use Early Childhood – Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (EC-PBIS) curriculum and the Ages and Stages Questionnaires screener.

<sup>3</sup> National Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center. (2011). *The Importance of Early Intervention for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities and their Families*. <http://www.nectac.org/~pdfs/pubs/importanceofearlyintervention.pdf>

**Preschool Programs**

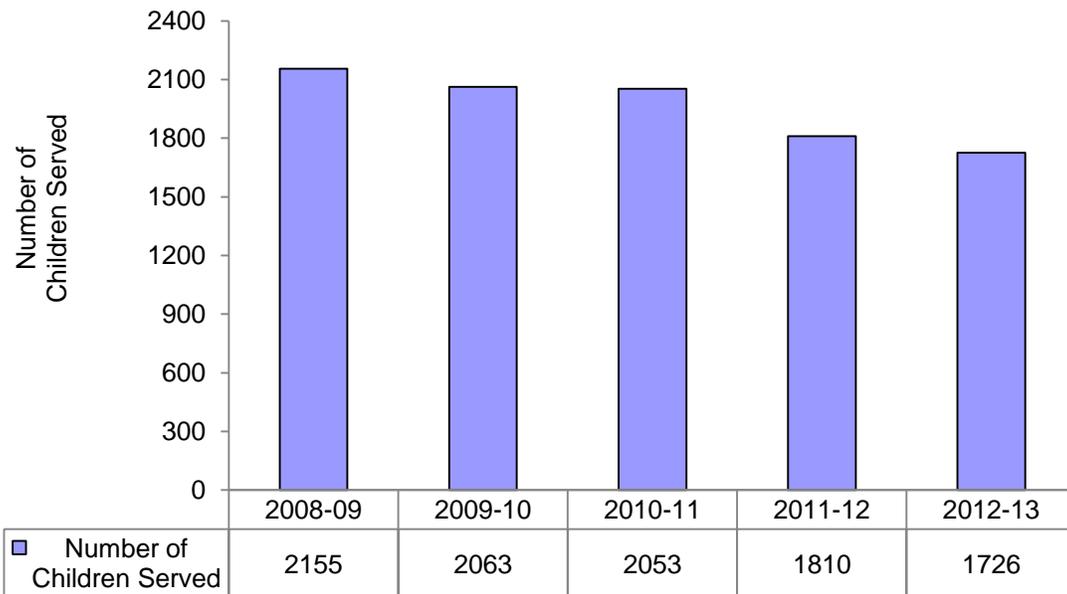
Iowa Shared Visions Preschool Programs include:

- High quality child development programs for at-risk children ages three to five years of age and whose families have an income below 130 percent of the poverty level;
- Collaborative partnerships between local Early Childhood Iowa Boards, Head Start, childcare, and school districts in 48 Iowa counties;
- A high level of accountability, documented extensive data collection, a history of established programming in the community with highly trained staff; and
- Programming in diverse settings to support community need and family choice.

**Funding.** In 2012-2013, state funds of \$6,540,233 provided 101 preschool grants supporting approximately 119 classrooms (25 fully funded classrooms and 94 partially funded classrooms) for children three to five years of age. The state funding only supports approximately 34 percent of the actual expenses needed to keep programs operating as they are currently structured.

**Children Served.** Preschool services were provided to 1,726 children, decreasing by approximately 84 children from the 2011-2012 program year. The gradual decrease in enrollment is largely due to the \$1,181,248 cut in funding since 2007-2008. At this time, the increasing need for preschool services is evidenced as programs reported 928 eligible children remained on the waiting list.

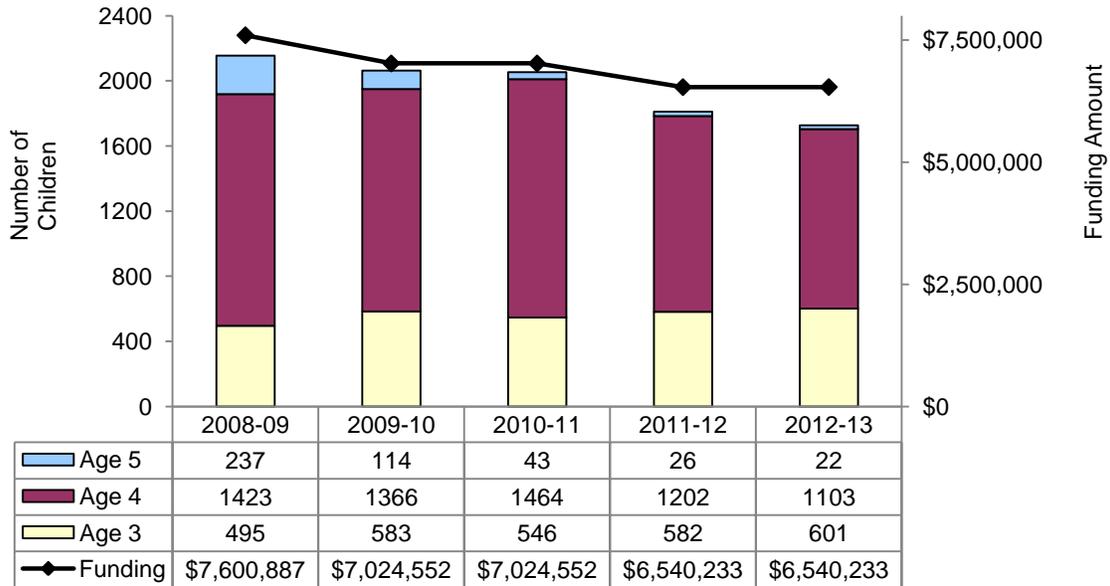
**Figure 2.** Five Year Trend - Number of Children Served in Shared Visions Preschool Programs.



Source. Iowa Department of Education, CDCC Shared Visions Grant Year End Report, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013 Summary.

Shared Visions Preschool Programs serve primarily four-year-olds (see Figure 3). Overall, the number of three-year-olds served has gradually increased while the number of participating five-year-olds has decreased over the past five years. In 2012-2013, the number of four- and five-year-olds decreased which is reflective of the overall decrease in the number of children served.

**Figure 3.** Five Year Trend – Annual Funding and Age Breakdown of Children Served in Shared Visions Preschool Programs.

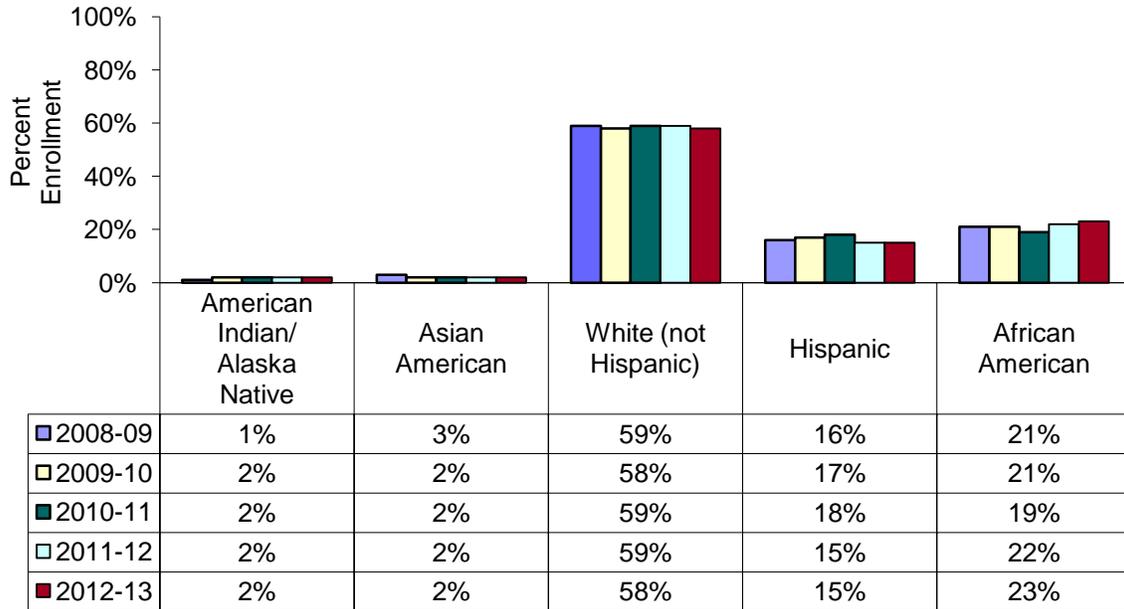


Source. Iowa Department of Education, CDCC Shared Visions Grant Year End Report, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013 Summary.

The majority of the children served in the Shared Visions Preschool Programs are at-risk due to poverty with the remaining children qualifying due to other at-risk factors. These risk factors may include developmental delays, being born at biological risk, being born to a parent under the age of 18, or having other special circumstances such as foster care or being homeless. Additional risk factors may include, residing in a household where one or more parent has not completed high school, has been identified as a substance abuser or as chronically mentally ill, is illiterate, is incarcerated, or is a child or spouse abuser. Shared Visions Preschool Programs assist in identifying children needing early intervention services. Last year, Shared Visions Preschool Programs served a total of 209 young children needing special education services with 68 of those children being identified after being enrolled.

Figure 4 indicates enrollment by race/ethnicity. Overall, the ethnic representation of state enrollment for the Shared Visions Preschool Programs has been consistent from year to year. The gender of children served in 2012-2013 was also analyzed and 51 percent were male and 49 percent were female.

**Figure 4. Five Year Trend - Shared Visions Preschool Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity.**



Source. Iowa Department of Education, CDCC Shared Visions Grant Year End Report, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013 Summary.

**Shared Visions Preschool High Quality Services.** Providing high quality services to children at-risk has been a distinguishing characteristic of Shared Visions Preschool Programs. All programs are required to achieve and maintain accreditation by National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the national standard of highest quality for early childhood programs.

Another element of quality is the requirement that all programs use a common statewide child assessment, the *Teaching Strategies GOLD* Online Assessment System. *GOLD* focuses on 38 research-based objectives for development and learning that are predictors of school success and aligned with the Iowa Early Learning Standards. *GOLD* is also a curriculum neutral assessment so it may be used in conjunction with any curriculum that programs are using.

An external evaluation of classroom quality in all Shared Visions Preschool Program classrooms was completed in 2008. The full evaluation report is posted at Shared Visions Preschool Program website, Evaluation:

<https://www.educateiowa.gov/pk-12/early-childhood/shared-visions-preschool-program#Evaluation>.

**Results.** The Shared Visions Preschool Programs contribute to Iowa results.

**Healthy Children.** More than 99 percent of children participating in the Shared Visions Preschool Programs received all of their immunizations. During 2012-2013, grantees reported 96 percent of the children had health insurance. This has remained steady since 2010-2011 and has increased 3 percent since 2009-2010.

**Secure and Nurturing Child Care Environments.** Shared Visions Preschool Programs are accredited by NAEYC, implement a common statewide child assessment, and maintain a ratio of one adult for every eight children.

**Children Ready to Succeed in School.** Research indicates children enrolled in high quality early learning classrooms will be better prepared to successfully achieve the academic and social challenges of school-age programs. For children to develop these skills, they need opportunities to participate in early learning experiences that produce positive child and family outcomes. By implementing the NAEYC standards, the Shared Visions Preschool Programs are providing early learning experiences for preschoolers that meet high standards of quality.

### **Child Development Coordinating Council Recommendations**

#### **Future Needs for Shared Visions Parent Support Programs**

The Child Development Coordinating Council recommends the following:

- Support Shared Visions Parent Support Programs to achieve accreditation through either a nationally recognized accreditation process or the Iowa Family Support credential. (*Accreditation Standards require the use of family assessment tools and technology to improve the quality and accuracy of data used to support family progress and systems-level decision making.*)
- Support increasing access to more intensive and increased duration of services for at-risk families. (*No additional communities in Iowa have been provided the opportunity to apply for Shared Visions at-risk state funds for children since 1996.*)
- Support professional development for Shared Visions Parent Support Program staff which leads to achieving or maintaining accreditation.

#### **Future Needs for Shared Visions Preschool Programs**

The Child Development Coordinating Council recommends the following:

- Support increasing access and duration of services for at-risk children through the Shared Visions Preschool Program.
- Support professional development in the area of assessment and the implementation of *Teaching Strategies GOLD* Online Assessment System.
- Support program administration and staff to complete the *Teaching Strategies GOLD* Interrater Reliability Certification.
- Support ongoing assistance from area education agency Early Childhood Consultants in the area of professional development and technical assistance to Shared Visions Preschool Programs.
- Support the enhancement of overall classroom quality, curricular offerings, and teachers' competence within the Shared Visions Preschool Programs.